

## **Regional Extension Center (REC) Workgroup Meeting Notes**

### **May 26, 2009**

#### Welcome and Introductions

- Expectation of greater than 80 members in the Workgroup
- 3 Subcommittees and 3 Co-Chairs
- 2 Co-Chairs currently:
  - Sajid Ahmed, LA Care
    - Director of Health IT, leading LA Care health plan policy and programming HIT and HIE efforts
  - Laura Vance, Brown & Toland
    - Director of Physician Practice Solutions - deploying an EHR to their community physicians
- Communication Tools
  - Website ([www.hie.ca.gov](http://www.hie.ca.gov)) – formal site likely up in 4 to 5 weeks
  - Any questions should be sent to [hie@chhs.ca.gov](mailto:hie@chhs.ca.gov)
  - Listserves: [HITExtensionWG@maillist.dhs.ca.gov](mailto:HITExtensionWG@maillist.dhs.ca.gov)
  - Calls – Need to determine frequency and duration
  - Wiki – a link to be sent out shortly

#### REC Grant Application Requirements

- HITECH provides funding for RECs under a number of different requirements including that the REC must be a non-profit, must assist in the adoption and use of EHRs and HIE and disseminate best practices, among others
- More specific Federal guidance is expected in June

#### REC Charter

- The State cannot apply for Federal funding for the REC so it will be one or several non-profit stakeholders who submit the proposal(s)
- We envision a collaborative approach and a centralized operation, meaning one hub that will service the region in CA (or a region greater than that of the State)
  - We need to leverage a hub and spoke model to provide services throughout the region
  - No more than 10 RECs are likely to be funded across the country so we hope to facilitate an application process within CA

#### *Goals of the REC*

- Facilitate EHR purchase (include a component of HIE)
- Provide services to improve quality, safety and efficiency of health care
- Share and disseminate best practices within the state and nationally

#### *Proposed Subcommittee Formation (note: reformed later in discussion)*

- Subcommittee 1 - EHR Purchasing and Financing

- They would determine the requirements for EHR technologies for different provider types
- Subcommittee 2 - Provide Services to Improve Quality
  - They would identify the wraparound services the REC will provide. For example, a package of EHR software and hardware requirements, a template for a pre-negotiated vendor contract, a price list and opportunities for loans.
  - The other service the REC will offer will be to come into the practices and offer workflow redesign and other implementation support.
- Subcommittee 3 – ORIGINAL OBJECTIVE (recast below):
  - Share and disseminate best practices within the state and nationally
    - Determine best practices and evaluate REC service offerings
    - Outstanding Question: Should part of Subcommittee 3's task be to develop a sustainability model for the REC?

### Proposed Timeline

- Phase 1 – Develop Strategic Plans
  - Week of July 13 – Summit
    - Put the entire plan together and revise it
  - July 31 – Submit final plan to Advisory Board (the Advisory Board will help oversee this work)
  - August 17 – Publish final plan in middle of August
  - By September 1 – everything must be done
- Phase 2 – Develop Proposals
  - State could facilitate crafting of a proposal
- Phase 3 – Implementation
  - Put REC into place and receive funding

### Discussion

Kiki Nocella->

- How is the hub and spoke model addressed in the planning process (e.g. requirements to be a spoke)?
  - Kiki - Could fit in #2 – Services
- There is much to be done and so little time – imperative that we make the next 3 months getting out of the weeds
- With only 10 RECs being funded – are we prematurely limiting ourselves just to California or do we think broader than CA?
  - (Unknown Participant) - Could put that as part of the discussion for 3<sup>rd</sup> subcommittee

Kathy Ko ->

- There are at least 10 Federal regions so it would make some sense that we coordinate across the entire Federal region that includes CA. There has been a lot of

work done with Federal Region 10 so there can be some investigation of that question.

- Some concern about if we want to have weekly calls, how much staff support is there that we could actually have movement from one call to the next?
  - Jonah - How can we do this better so that we don't overextend consultants and participants?
  - Kathy - I would suggest a deep dive first organizing call with assignments and then people can feed information back through wiki. The following calls could then be bi-weekly as long as the subgroup is willing to execute and follow up on their assignments.
    - Mark Bertler – seems like people who have volunteered need to take a really active role but we need to ask that they truly are chairs, managers and conveners of their group and that expectations are very clear from the get-go
    - Laura Landry – The NHIN process was understaffed but we made it work. There will be a natural pull for people to meet more often – let subgroups manage that themselves after they find out roles and responsibilities.
    - Larry Ozeran – an initial 90 min. call would be good to set things up. Make sure that everyone has access to co-chairs and their e-mail addresses so they can be contacted directly.

**Decision Point (s): (1) Long initial call during the week of June 8 and then potentially bi-weekly calls following as the subcommittees see fit. (2) E-mail access to co-chairs and staff will be made available on the wiki.**

Nancy Oswald ->

- Looking at the scope of subcommittees – before we launch them, can we have some general agreement of what we are thinking of in terms of hubs and spoke?
  - The 1<sup>st</sup> subcommittee can be done on the hub level
  - The 2<sup>nd</sup> one is at the spoke level so we identify not just the services but which regions might be appropriate for spokes
  - The 3<sup>rd</sup> on best practices is at both levels
- Jonah – Agree. Also, the one thing about having more than one state is that we will need to develop requirements applicable to different states (such as emergency preparedness)
- Jonah - We don't have federal guidance so far as to how many Federal dollars could be allocated to the REC – anywhere from \$5 million to \$50 million dollars with a match.

Bill Spooner ->

- Both subcommittees 1 and 2 are intended to demonstrate best practices in the area of purchasing and implementation – I suggest making the third subcommittee governance and sustainability of the REC so we don't confuse services with organizations and design

Deborah Kohn ->

- Agreed with Bill's point.

### **Decision Point: (3) Change 3<sup>rd</sup> subcommittee to be Governance and Sustainability of the REC and incorporate best practices into Subcommittees 1 and 2**

Jay (sp?) ->

- Do we have any idea how much of the dollars we will have to come up with could be in-kind contribution versus cash?
  - Jonah - Don't know yet
- Which of the subcommittees get to argue about location of the hubs?
  - Jonah – this will lie in Subcommittee 3. However, we are not going to be making any decisions that will be immutable – we are proposing as much good information as possible to inform the decision. Anybody who feels they should be considered whether or not they are in Subcommittee 3 should put themselves out there and should propose why. Whoever is selected is seen as a neutral, fair, open 3<sup>rd</sup> party. Because of the Federal match, by definition there is skin in the game. So we aren't going to have orgs. who aren't involved in the development of the REC serving as the REC.
  - Bill – We can determine that we will endorse the best proposal – so orgs that think they can be a REC would propose their best model and we could endorse one or the other going forward – a competitive process to build collaborations.
  - Jonah – Part of the process is to define how many spokes there will be and the model we work through. The model should serve all CA organizations and provider types.
  - Larry – There could be a virtual set of spoke organizations once the umbrella org defines how different contractors could set them up. Seems that ultimately we will need feelers in lots of different places. Maybe that number of spokes is not limited but dependent upon capability and need to reach services. There could be a number of spokes or local extensions.
  - Bill – Could also think of an almost virtual hub and have people on the ground at a few spokes.

Unknown participant ->

- It sounded like monies might flow at end of the year – ultimately you need a non-profit that is formed to get money.
  - Jonah – that question needs to be addressed as we do this work. May be an existing non-profit – many out there that could fulfill that role. Unlikely to form a new non-profit but may identify one that is more of a pass-through that manages only funding.

Cindie Watkins ->

- How will the subcommittees cross-reference other workgroups so we don't duplicate?
  - Jonah – Given the amount of work, staff here and co-chairs will work to coordinate across subcommittees and groups. We have thought about that and the best thing we can think is to use staff here to overlap and inform.
- Cindie - Also, we will be a better competitor on national level if present one good option rather than multiple options (Jonah agreed).

Jennifer Sierras ->

- In the charter you reference linkages with the workforce and loan requirements groups. There needs to be a linkage to R&D as well. We could do that in subcommittee 3.
  - Jonah – Good, we will do that.

### **Decision Point: (4) Include linkage to R&D Workgroup in Charter.**

Kathy Kim ->

- The REC has to provide seemingly a lot of service and not just coordination. Love the idea of having a virtual, centralized hub reaching out to local providers and initiatives but need to ensure that the entity itself has enough infrastructure and resources so we don't get into shared accountability where no one actually provides the service. Can't all be done by volunteers.
- Also, we should not spend money on putting a new organization together, but rather leveraging existing organizations to use dollars effectively.

### **Thank You and Conclusion**

Please ask questions and we will post them and post answers. We will be scheduling a 90 min. meeting in 2 weeks and then regular check-ins after that. We look forward to your feedback as we go along.